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In Memory of Dr. Washington E. Fischel 1850-1914

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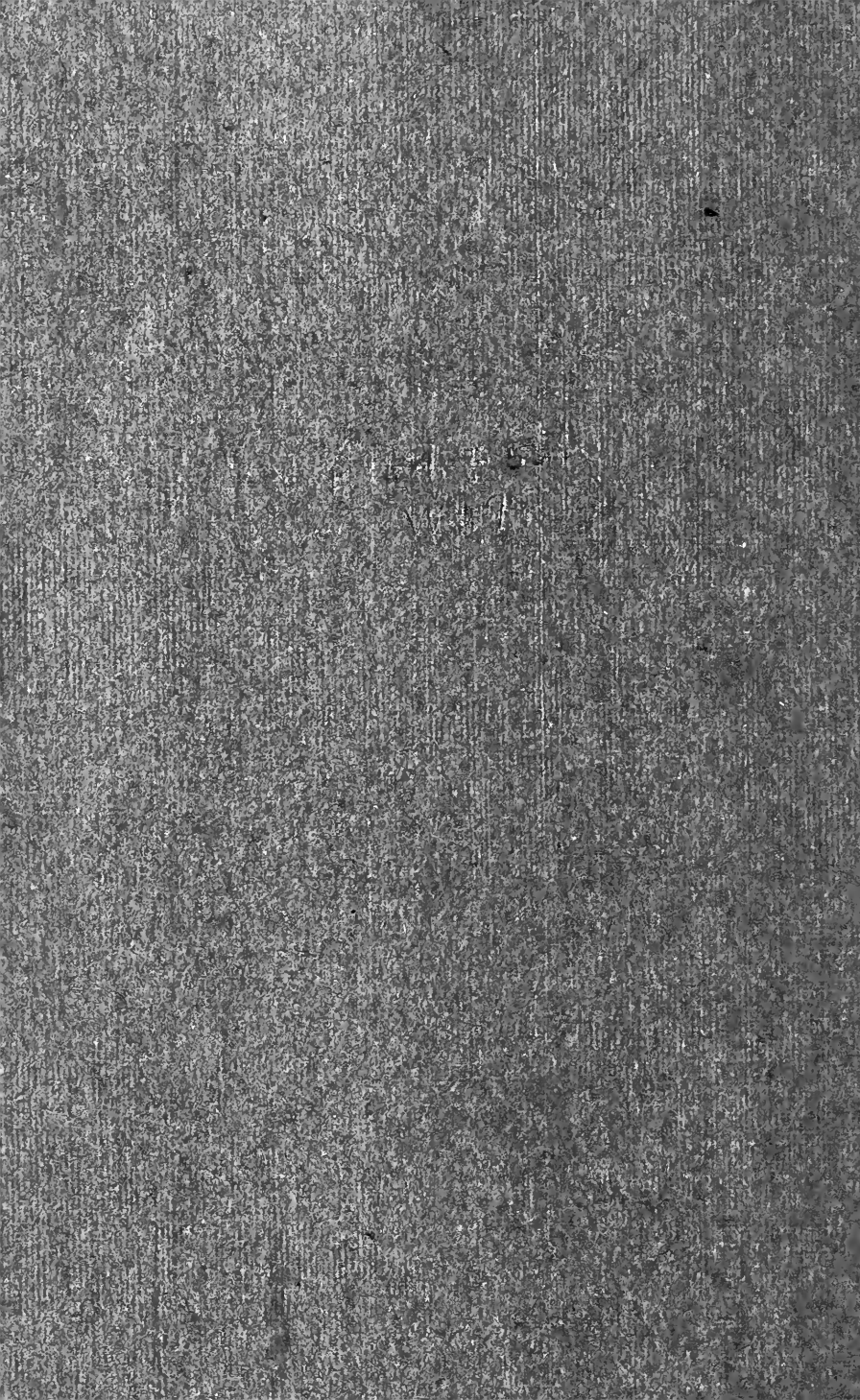


# In Memory of Dr. Washington E. Fischel

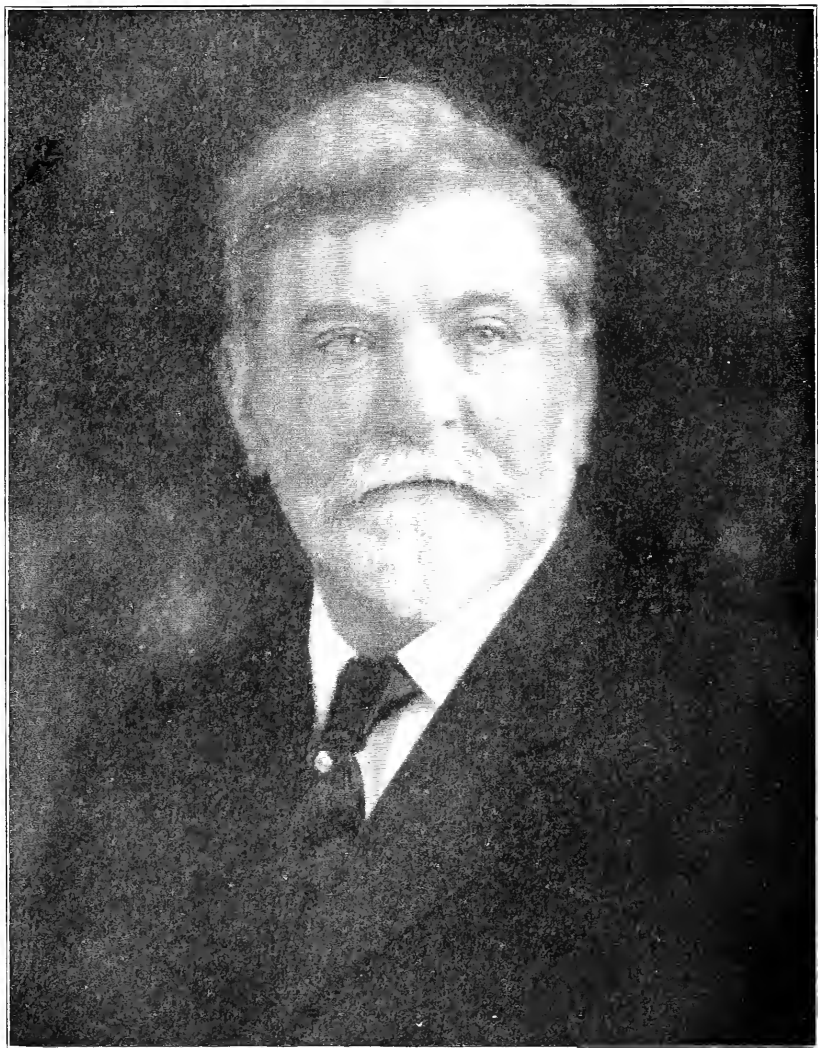
1850-1917

REMARKS AND ADDRESSES BY

JOHN BLASDEL SHAPLEIGH, M.D., FRANK  
V. HAMMAR, ABRAHAM JACOBI, M.D., LL.D.,  
AND FREDERIC A. HALL, LL.D. PRESENTED  
AT A MEETING HELD BY WASHINGTON UNI-  
VERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL



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*W. E. Fischel.*



# In Memory of Dr. Washington E. Fischel

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A meeting in memory of Dr. Washington E. Fischel was held in the Assembly Hall of Washington University Medical School on Sunday, Dec. 13, 1914, at 4 o'clock. Acting Chancellor Frederic A. Hall presided and addresses were made in commemoration of the work of Dr. Fischel as a physician, a citizen and a teacher by Dr. John Blasdel Shapleigh, Mr. Frank V. Hammar, Dr. Abraham Jacobi and Chancellor Hall.

Chancellor Hall opened the exercises with the following remarks:

We are assembled to-day to honor the memory of an eminent physician, a public-spirited citizen, a warm-hearted friend, a noble man. By our presence and our words we bring to this room a tribute to the life and character of the late Dr. Washington E. Fischel. Months hence this building and these grounds will be dedicated in formal manner, but in no slight sense we to-day dedicate this room to the ideals for which he stood — a room in which he himself would rather have spoken than in any other room in the entire world. His persistent efforts had no small influence in making these buildings possible. In this school and the adjacent hospitals was his affection planted deep; here his heart's interests centered. With loving hearts, then, appropriately here do we pay tribute to one who thus served the public.

I feel that it would be to mar the exercises were I to introduce the several speakers. Most of them are familiar to you all, and he whose face may not be familiar bears a name known through the medical world. To him especially is gratitude due that at his advanced age, in inclement weather, he should come so long a distance to speak for his friend and ours. Those who will address you have been selected from among Dr. Fischel's associates in the medical world and in philanthropic and educational enterprises. Each will speak as he may wish, but however inadequate their words may be, they testify to a desire on the part of everyone to honor the memory of him in whose name we meet.

## WASHINGTON EMIL FISCHEL

AN ADDRESS BY JOHN BLASDEL SHAPLEIGH, M.D.

To have practiced medicine in this community continuously for forty years; from small beginnings to have built up a large practice; to have been for years acknowledged by his colleagues as a leader, and to have commanded their respect through high professional ideals and their esteem through uprightness of character; to have gained a high and more than local reputation in his chosen department of practice; to have rendered efficient and untiring service to his fellows for more than a generation, and to have exerted a positive influence for good among us; these are evidences of an active, useful and successful life, and they are the record of Dr. Fischel's professional career.

Meeting here to honor the memory of one so prominent in his profession, and whose reputation in medical circles in the East and in Europe made him the representative of internal medicine in this city, it is fitting that something be said of his work in medicine and of the interests and associations that gave it its conspicuous success and value.

Dr. Fischel was born in this city on May 29, 1850. He graduated from the St. Louis High School in 1868, and in 1871, when not quite 21, received from the St. Louis Medical College the degree of Doctor of Medicine. After serving as intern in the St. Louis City Hospital he continued his post-graduate studies at the universities of Prague, Berlin and Vienna. He returned to St. Louis in 1874 and began the practice of his profession.

It is only under exceptional conditions that a physician steps at once into an extensive practice. Usually its growth, though cumulative, is slow, and the early years are times of trial and struggle. This was true of Dr. Fischel, but he won his way to success by virtue of qualities that made failure impossible.

Who that knew him failed to feel his magnetic energy! Who could resist the charm of his greeting, of the cordial handclasp and the gracious consideration he bestowed on all! Who of all his patients did not know the comfort and encouragement his visits brought! His presence in the sick-room seemed to radiate cheer and courage; his confidence and strength brought renewed hope.

There are personalities who unconsciously command our confidence and upon whom we instinctively rely. It is the privilege

of strong natures thus to impress others and few have possessed this power in greater degree than did Dr. Fischel.

Ask the rich why they chose him as their physician. They will tell you of their confidence in his ability; of his care and watchfulness; of the comfort and encouragement his personality inspired. Ask the poor and they will tell you not only of his skill, but of his generous kindness and of his consideration for their needs. And so while his ability brought him many patients, both rich and poor, his personal qualities and his interest in their welfare bound them to him and gained for him their loyalty and friendship.

Dr. Fischel valued this feeling on the part of his patients very highly. He wanted to be, and sought to be, the family friend as well as the family doctor. That in so many homes his death is felt as a personal grief, shows how well he succeeded.

Unquestionably, the first duty of a physician is to his patients. His time, his strength, his skill belong to them, and their need should be the measure of his service. He owes it to them to prepare himself for his professional work in the best possible manner and by continued study to keep himself informed of the constant advances made in medical science and practice, to the end that those who intrust themselves to his care may receive the benefit of what is found good in the new methods of diagnosis and treatment. These obligations Dr. Fischel met fully. Responding freely to the demands of his patients, he spent himself unreservedly in their service. Always informed as to the newest in medical research, he was ready to abandon the old and adopt the new whenever his judgment and experience confirmed the new as better.

Of almost equal importance to his duty to his patients is the physician's obligation to his profession. It is incumbent on him to uphold its noble traditions and to oppose all things that might lessen the dignity of, or bring reproach upon, a calling that is humanitarian and not commercial. He should share with his colleagues the results of his own experience and investigation by contributing to medical literature, or by work in medical societies, or as a teacher.

Dr. Fischel's contributions to medical literature were mostly in the form of papers and reports to various medical societies and not preserved in permanent form. This is to be regretted,

for his thorough knowledge and clear views of medical subjects, his accurate judgment and his wide experience would have made anything from his pen most valuable.

In his earlier years Dr. Fischel was active in the affairs of the St. Louis Medical Society, holding the position of secretary in 1878 and of treasurer from 1880 to 1884. He was also a member of various other medical societies both local and national, whose leaders became his warm personal friends.

His greatest interest, however, centered in the cause of medical education, and as teacher and faculty member he rendered perhaps his most valuable service to his profession. In both capacities he filled a prominent place in the history of the St. Louis Medical College and the Washington University Medical School during the last fifteen or twenty years. His connection with this institution began in 1881 and continued unbroken until his death.

In 1881 he was made lecturer on therapeutics and two years later became a member of the faculty, being called to fill the newly created chair of hygiene and forensic medicine. In 1886 he was made professor of clinical medicine, which position, with occasional change of title, he held for twenty-eight years.

To his work in the clinics and the wards of the University Hospital he brought the same energy and thoroughness that characterized him in all he did. He loved this work and counted no sacrifice too great for its faithful performance.

For the following estimate of Dr. Fischel as a clinical teacher I am indebted to Dr. Albert Taussig, who was for years associated with him in the work.

"The many years during which I was associated with Dr. Fischel, first as pupil and then as assistant, served to fill me with an increasing admiration of his wonderful ability as a teacher of medicine. While he frequently employed the Socratic method of leading the student by skilful questioning into correct paths of observation and reasoning, and while he occasionally indulged himself in a systematic discussion of some special disease or group of diseases, his favorite method of teaching, and the one in which he was most successful, was somewhat different. With the patient before him, and an attentive group of students seated round about, he would first make clear the noteworthy features of the case under discussion and then draw upon an unusually

retentive memory to illustrate, by analogy and by contrast, in the discussion of other somewhat similar cases, the various aspects of the case at hand. Such a presentation of the subject could not always be entirely systematic, but this fault, if it was one, was more than counterbalanced by the resulting vividness and concreteness. He was an eager student of medical literature and was broadened by frequent intimate personal contact with the great clinicians of this and other countries, but it was when drawing upon his own vast personal experience that his lectures became most illuminating and inspiring.

While always insisting upon the fundamental necessity for correct diagnosis, he never allowed his students to forget that diagnosis is never more than a means to an end and that the patient's welfare. Thus his clinics were eminently practical, in the best sense of that much misused term. In his own practice his most striking characteristic was his unfailing resourcefulness in the face of an emergency. Something of this quality it was his constant aim to impress upon his students and his classes were sure to carry away with them not only a deep sense of their personal responsibility to their patients, but many a definite suggestion for later use in their own work."

As a member of the faculty he rendered many valuable services to the medical school and had much to do with forming and directing its policy and plans. In the years following the death of the dean, Dr. H. H. Mudd, he was one of the leading forces in the faculty, and to his zeal and devotion to its interests the school owed much. Again, in 1910, when the complete reorganization of the medical school by the directors of Washington University was undertaken, his advice was sought, and his influence and earnest cooperation were of great assistance in bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Proud as he was of the past record and reputation of his alma mater, he saw in this reorganization the promise of greater things and he regarded it as the first step toward placing her in the front rank of university medical schools. He looked forward to seeing the fulfilment of his aspirations begun by the completion of the new buildings for the medical department. Almost to the last he hoped to be able to take part in the opening ceremonies, and it was a bitter disappointment when he realized that this was not to be.

When in 1883 Dr. Fischel became a member of the faculty of the St. Louis Medical College he became also a member of the Medical Fund Society. He was secretary of this society from 1886 to 1912, and its president from 1912 till his death. I think that of all his connections with medical organizations Dr. Fischel held none dearer than this. As the existence of the Medical Fund Society is not known outside a comparatively small circle, a few words regarding it may not be out of place as explaining his feeling for it and as demonstrating the unselfish devotion to the cause of medicine of its founders.

The Medical Fund Society was incorporated in 1872. At that time practically all medical schools were proprietary enterprises, without university connection and under complete control of their respective faculties. The cost of conducting such a school, there being no salaried teachers and no laboratories or hospital to maintain, was relatively small, and each year the net profits were divided among the faculty members. This plan was in force at that time in the St. Louis Medical College. Realizing the need for better medical teaching, and especially the necessity for clinical teaching in hospitals and dispensaries under the school's control, the members of the faculty of the St. Louis Medical College formed the Medical Fund Society, whose object was the accumulation of a trust fund to be used for this purpose, and primarily for the purchase of the property on Seventh and Myrtle streets, where the St. Louis Medical College was then located. In order to accumulate this fund, each member pledged himself to pay to the society each year his share in the profits of the medical college. Since then, except in the case of salaried teachers, the members of the faculty have given their services without compensation.

The work of the Medical Fund Society was invaluable in the advancement of medical education in St. Louis. By the pecuniary sacrifice of its members the society was enabled to acquire first the property at Seventh and Myrtle streets, and later to erect the building on Locust and Eighteenth streets, so long occupied by the medical school and now being given up for the new buildings provided by the university for its medical department.

In 1912 the Medical Fund Society transferred this Locust Street property to the Washington University on the latter assuming its bonded indebtedness. The incorporators of the Medical Fund Society were A. Litton, J. B. Johnson, E. H. Gregory, John

T. Hodgen, J. S. B. Alleyne, E. F. Smith, L. C. Boisliniere and John J. McDowell, and among its later members were Henry H. Mudd, Gustave Baumgarten and John Green. These are names the medical profession of our city holds in proud remembrance, and they are written high upon its roll of honor.

Sharing the ideals of these men, himself a partner in their labors and in their self-sacrificing loyalty to their conception of professional duty, it is no wonder that Dr. Fischel cherished the traditions of this society so dearly and counted his membership in it so great a privilege and honor.

But besides his duty to his patients and to his profession, the physician has an obligation to the community in which he lives. In this respect Dr. Fischel was not found wanting. He was keenly interested in all matters concerning the public health and was always ready to lend his support to any civic enterprise, or any philanthropic or educational endeavor that in his judgment was of value.

He was for many years a member of the medical staff of St. Luke's Hospital, and was connected with the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital from its organization. This phase of his medical work will, however, be the theme of another speaker.

While what I have said may have given you some idea of the professional ability and skill of Dr. Fischel; of the esteem in which he was held by his colleagues; of his reputation and success and of the value of his medical work, I am conscious that it has failed to bring before you the real Dr. Fischel. Words cannot do this. Only by meeting him face to face and receiving his hearty handclasp and his genial, courteous greeting; by noting the tactful kindness that made you feel that your affairs were of the first importance to him; by seeing him in the sick-room or the hospital ward and observing the gentle thoroughness of his examination of his patients and by feeling the atmosphere of strength and cheer he brought with him; by seeing the wan face brighten at his coming and the tired eyes light up with new hope and courage; only by such personal knowledge is it possible to have known Dr. Fischel as he was — a true gentleman and a great physician.

And so the summons came, as he himself would have chosen, in the full tide of his work and in the maturity of his strength, before advancing age had lessened his activities or limited his usefulness.

## WASHINGTON EMIL FISCHEL

AN ADDRESS BY FRANK V. HAMMAR

As president of the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital, it is my very great honor to speak of Dr. Fischel's connection with various philanthropies in this city. It is very difficult to give a detail of the constructive philanthropy of a long life devoted to the welfare of the people and the upbuilding of institutions for public benefactions.

For a true interpretation we should have to consider practically every hour of the span of such a life; for no day passes that does not make its record of some good done to humanity. Whether the execution of his work was a single service to one person, or whether it was a service instigated by himself and carried out through the instrumentality of many other men, the human mind grasps but one unit of endeavor; but there is a psychological appreciation of proportion, and the public holds its corresponding and comparative judgment of a man's personality, for his whole work.

The element of love among the people is typified by father and mother. The words have come to mean love and service, daily and continuously. If father and mother are spoken of with such an understanding, the synonym of Dr. Fischel is super-father, for not only did he represent love and service in his family, but in hundreds of homes and in thousands of instances. It was no uncommon occurrence to hear that without the knowledge that Dr. Fischel was within call the dread of possibilities and the fear of personal peril transcended the possibilities of father and mother service, and peace and relief were impossible until such burdens were shifted onto the shoulders that had proven in countless instances to be adequate to the demands. With this knowledge of his services there was the soul satisfaction that whatever human knowledge could accomplish would be done at whatever sacrifice of his personal effort.

He brought healing, cheerfulness and contentment wherever he went. Such a relationship cannot be valued in terms of visits or consultations or fees of money, for the poor were quite as important to Dr. Fischel as the rich and received the same careful, devoted consideration and the invaluable benefit of his great scientific knowledge. And such a relationship proves the personality of the man who can sink himself in a sincere effort in



doing good and who accepts as a personal responsibility, not only healing, but the greater and unpurchasable boon of sympathy and fellowship in pain and sorrow. Such service is without price, and for such a life Dr. Fischel was so well beloved by the community as a whole.

The very character of his labors was such that he could not share his burden with others. He shared the pain and suffering with his patients, but the great responsibility of conserving human life and happiness he carried alone. That the responsibility was great and distressing to one of so tender a heart, was very apparent to those who knew him. It was acute personal suffering, and in his supreme efforts, which could not in their very nature be always successful, he could only paraphrase the sand diviner, "Only God and I know what is in my heart." But we knew, in a way, what he suffered on such occasions and we loved him for it.

If such results are the reward of effort for individuals, there is a correspondingly greater reward in the opinions of mankind for such civic service as he gave to his native city. So far as I know, there has been no movement or organization proposed in this city that had for its object the good of the people as a whole in which Dr. Fischel was not immediately interested. He gave his heart interest and he gave gladly, not only of his own professional knowledge, but what was of equal value, his powerful abilities as an organizer and as an executive. He created opportunities for doing good; he brought them to fruition, and throughout their term he so guided and governed them and conciliated contending factions, that his presence on any board was a source of exceeding gratification and assistance to his fellow associates and a very necessary factor to success. Further, because of his fellowship and his standing in the community, his name in connection with any movement gave it immediate prestige, both as to highest professional qualification and also as a guarantee of highest business probity. He was a man who did things. He was a splendid type of dynamic energy in life's affairs, one that was remarkable even in the community of virile men. He was a tireless worker, and few, if any, men gave more hours of concentrated thought and untiring activity to the demands of his profession.

In 1905 it developed that the free institutions of St. Louis would not give adequate care and attention to those unfortunates

suffering from cancer and skin diseases, especially in the advanced stages. In association with other broad-minded men and women who felt the need, Dr. Fischel was instrumental in organizing the institution now known as the Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital. He labored long and earnestly in its formation, in the detail of its organization, both in the hospital itself and on the board of general direction. He gave not only his time, but his money, and through the power of his influence he brought such weight to bear that the institution became an immediate financial and professional success. As the need developed into greater proportion, his interest also expanded, and there was built up the present splendid success that has done so much for the alleviation of pain and the comfort of those unfortunates of our city. To the day of his death he was chairman of the medical board of the institution and a most valuable assistant on the board of directors.

In 1910, through Dr. Fischel's instrumentality, the department of pathology was added to the hospital. He took the greatest possible interest in this branch, having for its object the study of the cause and cure of cancer. He was unfaltering in his endorsement of this purely scientific endeavor for the general uplift of humanity. And it appears to-day as one of the most tragic ironies of fate, that the very condition he fought so hard to overcome for others should in the end have overcome him. "He could save others, but himself he could not save."

It is with a due sense of our obligations to him that I, as president of this hospital, make grateful acknowledgement for such services.

There are two other institutions in the city that are so intimately associated with Dr. Fischel that we can hardly think of him and not connect him with them—the medical department of the Washington University and St. Luke's Hospital. At the very beginning of his life as a physician he became greatly interested in the success of the St. Louis Medical College.

He was very active in bringing about the consolidation with the Missouri Medical College, and appreciating at an early date the advantages that would accrue from association with the Washington University, his energy and influence were instrumental in establishing the present medical department of that university, which has such infinite promise for the future. He was a member of the faculty and professor of medicine for

many years. Of equal importance was his association with St. Luke's Hospital. He was a member of the active staff during the early years when the hospital was on Nineteenth Street and Washington Avenue. Through the need for greater and more extended facilities, resulting from such excellence of practice that only such men as Dr. Fischel can give, the institution expanded into its present splendid establishment. For thirty years he has given it devoted attention, both as a physician and for some years on the board of general direction. He was vice-president of the Tuberculosis Society, director of American School of Hygiene, member of the National Association for Relief and Prevention of Tuberculosis and of the Association of American Physicians.

So our city benefited greatly through Dr. Fischel's life. We have lost a most valued member of our philanthropic society, but his life's results are an inspiration to all of us, and while we shall miss him greatly, his accomplishments will live and encourage those of us who at times feel the discouragement that must always follow in some degree our own greatest endeavors of success.

Dr. Fischel was not a man to seek the applause of men; he did not court publicity, but, like many other men, his good works were covered with a mantle of modesty and but few knew of them, but they were the medium by which many days of suffering were relieved and many lives made comfortable and happy, which without him would have been destitute and despondent.

He has gone from among us and his passage from this world to a brighter one was accompanied by the sighs of the multitude to whom he had given love and service, and they carried him as a benediction to the very steps of the heavenly throne.

## WASHINGTON EMIL FISCHEL

AN ADDRESS BY ABRAHAM JACOBI, M.D., LL.D.

Ten years ago Dr. Washington Emil Fischel invited me to address the graduating class of the medical school of Washington University. He requested me to select for my remarks a topic that would be of some use at and after the commencement of the young doctors' new lives. It struck me that if I drew for them a mental picture of the very man who honored me with an opportunity to speak to his young friends and pupils, I should succeed in delineating to them whatever was choicest in practical

medicine and pure citizenship. My subject was: "The Modern Doctor." With my mental eye on Fischel, I could have depicted for them the assiduous student, the ever-occupied and self-sacrificing family practitioner, the ethical consultant, the successful teacher, the public adviser who renders services too valuable to be paid for with money or public places, and the sociologist who teaches eugenics and virtue to the nation and its governing powers. Indeed, there was no class of people he did not benefit, no exalted virtue he did not practice.

Fischel died much too soon, but his life was long enough to experience many things in the practice and the teaching of medicine. Of both he had full knowledge, and to the evolution of both he contributed more than an average share.

Dr. Fischel knew the medical schools of this country when the curriculum extended over two short seasons only. The didactic lectures of one year were repeated the next; bedside instruction, there was none; a few sick were presented in a weekly hour to students gathering in the amphitheater; the example of real clinical instruction attempted in the smallest of the New York schools, the Medical College of East Thirteenth Street, which had to close its doors toward the end of the Civil War, remained without permanent results. Gradually the two-year course was replaced by one of three years, of four years; and the progressive changes in medical instruction caused by restrictions in matriculation and the introduction of state examinations are well known. In most of these movements Fischel, who had spent years in German universities, participated modestly, but effectually.

The work of a family physician underwent important changes during his active life. Those who study at present, also those who have practiced only a decade or two, cannot appreciate the great difficulties and grave responsibilities of the early practitioner. There was no Lister, no antiseptis, no aseptis; but much erysipelas and gangrene and misunderstood fever, many unfathomed and sudden changes in the course of an infectious epidemic, and more unexplained deaths than at present.

Eighty years ago it was ascertained that of thirty-five sick thirty-four would die, while at the present time the same number will recover. Pasteur and Lister stopped that misery. Safety increased from year to year with corresponding changes in methods of diagnosis and practice. They are not all praise-

worthy. The safety due to soap and water, corrosive sublimate, peroxid of hydrogen and tincture of iodine, combined with general and local anesthesia, have created a sad temptation to perform operations of doubtful value or dignity. That is not as it should be. All that glitters is not gold. But without glitter there is much gold, and more genuine gold will come to the surface. Fischel's vast experience and impartial judgment appreciated all that. The men who worked and taught like him accepted willingly the new additions to diagnosis and practice, but did not substitute them altogether for their old possessions. To make a diagnosis they did not wait for the necropsy or a laparotomy, which permits a more or less direct inspection of a cavity. They had eyes in the tips of their fingers, and their most important instruments of precision were their brains and their practiced eyes and ears. May the men who live now never forget that there were great doctors more than fifty years ago.

The men of that period knew all that was known at that time. They were fully modern then. They remained modern while they added the results of bacteriological and, later on, chemical research to their stock of knowledge. Having been reared in the experience of centuries and accustomed to the means of cure and relief, they did not find it difficult to learn the new gospel. Fischel belonged to that class. While thus progressing, he was a circumspect and successful teacher, general practitioner and consultant, benefiting through his comprehensive gifts both the student classes and the public. Such men are not frequent even at present.

Still, there is no reproach to the men of industry and genius who specialize for research when we acknowledge that their horizon, while they work and discover and teach, may become narrow. It is true, medicine requires their work; they benefit medicine, which is being built up on the cooperation of many. They do not, however, while furnishing foundation stones and pillars on which the edifice of scientific modern medicine is erected, contribute to the art of medicine. It is the art of medicine, however, which is needed and demanded by mankind and must be taught in schools. That was, as I learned from Fischel's lips, his creed and faith.

The subject of one of our late conversations was the relation of the physician to the public. Dr. Fischel's activity in the practice of medicine was not limited. He began his career as a

general practitioner. His heart was big, his knowledge rapidly increasing, his interests extensive. We looked — he and I — on the family physician as the prop and staff of the profession and of the country. It is the general practitioner who in his county and state medical societies suggested and enforced improved instruction and better schools. Of that kind was his practice for a long time. It was in no way specialized. Whenever he required specialized skill, he knew where to find it and when to advise it. He earned the gratitude and love of those whom he relieved or restored, in their variegated ailments, and that of their relatives and friends. He was looked up to as the benefactor of the multitude. He treated patients of more than one generation — grandparents, parents and children formed his clientele. He knew their bodies and souls; they trusted him and loved him as only a doctor, as no clergyman or lawyer was ever loved or trusted. He was their doctor, their friend, their confessor, their adviser in health and in sickness, and shared their secrets. That is why he could be successful in relieving both their physical and spiritual needs. He appreciated that whoever expects to aid and cure his neighbor must first understand him and that, like the inequalities of individual features, their natures are unequal. As he was gifted both with intuitive observation and philosophical insight, he was readily credited with being the godly physician of whom Hippocrates tells us.

The criticism of one of the great physicians of the Atlantic Coast found no favor with him, nor any justification. According to the latter, the family physician has no longer any defensible existence; ailments should be handled by a specialist whose modern accomplishments must be relied upon in adversity.

To arrive at that conclusion he committed the chronological mistake of asking the family physician of fifty or seventy-five years ago to grapple with the case of to-day. The family practitioner of fifty years ago was the accomplished physician of his time. Year out, year in, he learned what the men of great opportunities and genius and research discovered for him and applied it as they could not have applied it themselves. Forty years ago, thirty, twenty, ten years ago he learned constantly both the science and the art of medicine. If not always ahead, he was ever abreast with and never in the rear of the active medical column. My friend in New York had in mind the sluggard in practice, and not the progressive, clear-eyed, and watchful prac-

itioner who has not forgotten the old tools of his art while welcoming new ones; and he did not realize the fact that there is many a patient who is not cured by medicine but by the doctor.

The great danger connected with modern teaching and modern practice is not the acceptance in an individual case of the mere laboratory reports of the examination of secretions, excretions, blood and artery pressure, and the employment of the many new instruments of precision, but the teaching in some schools and the tendency on the part of many ill-guided students to adopt as complete a diagnosis based upon mere laboratory tests, a sort of absent treatment. The general practitioner, coming from such a school or imbued with such habits of laziness or self-indulgence, is very apt to rely exclusively on the genuine or alleged competent or defective laboratory. Dr. Fischel complained that the instruction of many schools neglected the most important instruments of precision, which are the brains and the educated fingers, ears and eyes, and also the correct observations of the historical and contemporaneous masters of our art. He feared lest the young disciple and practitioner should no longer learn how to judge of the pulse — its softness, hardness, frequency, alternation, irregularity — and rather rely on the sphygmograph alone, though handled by some one else. The modernized pupil is liable to trust in an electrocardiogram alone in place of an old-fashioned but trustworthy auscultation, and to refuse to examine a patient and his history before sending him to the radiologist. What Fischel looked forward to was the whole of clinical instruction and independent bedside study for the future "therapos," that is, the servant of the sick. He was anxiously awaiting the time when the Washington University Medical School, reinforced by the intelligent generosity of gifted lay philosophers and enjoying vastly improved facilities, would turn out only such physicians as combine new tools and modern methods with preexistent long-cultivated experience.

His life was divided between practicing and teaching. That is why we easily understood one another on questions connected with schools and universities. To him the latter was not a place to obtain a diploma or a title, but one of general philosophical education and spirit, of teaching and of research.

The medical school is part of the university, with all the breadth of its principles. That is why medical research should be encouraged in a medical student, to a certain extent, at least.

Every medical student should be taught the methods of research, but the methods only. Only those few of the class who mean to spend their lives in it, should be taught to invade and occupy the territory of the theories and practice of mere science. That takes all of his life. No mere student of medicine who prepares for practice should undertake to spend the years of his curriculum on deep research.

Medicine, which is to be dedicated to the service of the people, sick or well, requires all the time and efforts of the most gifted. "Eines schickt sich nicht für alle." Not everything is proper for everybody.

One day I asked him to what extent he and his school were teaching therapeutics, physical and medicinal. He regretfully admitted that many medical schools he knew were apt to forget that their principal reason for existence was the furnishing of good doctors for the cure or prevention of diseases. These count by the hundred; their causes are legion, their manifestations many. Only of late are our student classes being taught hygiene as a preventive, the use of cold and warm air and water, the chemistry of food-stuffs, the physiology of digestion, the effect of darkness and light, the ill effects of poisons, such as alcohol and tobacco. The gravest mistake of our instruction is the neglect of medication and its administration. Meanwhile, among the public the ranting against drugs ranks as a modern curse. Hatred of drugs is inscribed on the flags of the quacks and sectarians who have succeeded in demoralizing public conscience. Our legislators are constantly besieged with and conquered by bills to legitimize ignorance. New sects apply for recognition solely on account of their not using drugs. They insolently plead not guilty of knowing and employing the best friends of the sick. Perhaps, however, they belong to the school of Tatian, who fifteen hundred years ago taught that remedies were permissible for heathen, not for christians. Unfortunately, the public, including legislators, gather their pseudomedical maxims from the young reporters who concoct part of our daily press from the whims of humorous medical men bent upon the mere entertainment of their audiences, upon cheap applause and financial rewards, and from the wholesale tradesmen who swamp the markets with circulars eulogizing proprietary medicines and nostrums. What would you do without the drugs that relieve exhausting pain in peritonitis, stones in the kidneys and gall-



bladder, nervous exhaustion; without the quinin, which cures your malaria; the mercury, iodin and salvarsan, which relieve syphilis; thyroid extract, which cures myxedema and cretinism; digitalis and strophanthus and caffen, which stimulate or strengthen the heart; theobromin and nitrite, which regulate blood pressure; antitoxin in diphtheria, tetanus and typhoid; without arsenic, that great nutrient and nerve remedy; iron, the regenerator of impoverished blood; calcium, adrenal and thymus extracts, and the dozen of alkalies? And what will your pupils and practitioners do with all of them unless they are taught how to prescribe them better than the officious drummer with the wagging tongue?

Though our meetings were too few, Dr. Fischel gave me opportunities to admire his humanitarianism. He expressed the wish that all our medical students and young practitioners could always appreciate the frequency with which suffering is increased by their carelessness. Can you make a correct diagnosis and fashion your prognosis? If you do, please learn something more — and more important — a hasty word is a dagger you thrust into the soul of the sick or dying. Your patient asks you: "Am I consumptive?" and his scared look informs you that he fears your answer. In place of telling him that he is consumptive, and so driving him to despair, what will you tell him? Tell him: "You have tuberculosis in your lungs. Many such cases get well. Almost no one dies in old age who has not at some time or other had tuberculosis and got well. By care and good luck your tuberculosis may improve or get entirely well. If you get worse, however, your tuberculosis might indeed turn into consumption. Now, see to it, not to get worse, and you may learn how to avoid that." That man has a better chance to get well, for you have given him hope, than which there is no better stimulant for his nerves, and the courage to do something for himself and to give the lie to one of our whimsical celebrities in the East who claims that the treatment of consumption is opium and lies.

Another patient has been told he has cancer in his liver. He knows the term and that cancer is fatal. "How long have I to live? But doctor, is it cancer, as they told me?" "I do not know how long you will live. I do not even know how long I shall live. But you would do wrong to neglect yourself. You have a tumor, you feel it yourself; that is all you need know and fear. I advise against an operation at this time, for medication can do a great

deal for you." So it can, young man; but if you tell him he has cancer he will die soon after, having spent his remaining days in constant fear and agony; while the hope, born of uncertainty and sympathy, will encourage him, make him live longer, and when the time comes he will die in comparative comfort. Which do you prefer? I know what I prefer, and to me it was a great satisfaction to learn from Fischel that I was correct. This was his way, and it is the way of those who know how to differentiate between a medical mere man and a medical humanitarian. Unfortunately, humanitarianism and altruism are not inscribed in the hearts of all those who have M.D. engraved on their diplomas. The nature of man is liable to be narrow. Even heroes of intelligence do not always combine practice with science and humanity, like Virchow, who succeeded. He claimed that medicine failed in its calling unless it became the property of mankind. Not all, even great practitioners, join the warmth of the heart to their diagnostic acumen. That is true, though what superficial persons say is not correct, that the doctor gets cold and callous with advancing years. To me it is a consolation to have experienced the reverse in many colleagues, though not always to the extent in which cool judgment and ripe experience and warm sympathy were joined in Fischel.

Fischel was a humanitarian by temperament, and by innate and acquired wisdom. This great physician who remained a general practitioner because he could not limit himself to a specialty; who was a loved teacher, because even the youngest disciple knew or guessed the breadth of his teacher's interest, became the admired and much-loved fellow-citizen because his inclinations and wishes and activities prevented his broad nature from confining himself to the mere practice of physic.

There was more to him. I wonder whether he himself was aware of the weight of his words and the influence of his argumentation. What his personality meant in local and state affairs of medicine, you know best. In the preparation of what was meant to become the World's Congress of Medicine in connection with the Exposition of 1904, Fischel's advice was anxiously sought for and conscientiously followed. That his wisdom and moderation and energy would have continued to be of vast influence in the perfection of your Washington University, I doubt not.

Everyone felt that to praise him as a great and good physician rendered no adequate justice. I wonder whether at any time this

owner of a thousand friendships had any enemies. It is not always true that a strong man is never without them. After all in Fischel's character, strength was not the only prevailing element. Warmth and sympathy predominated to such an extent that he may have lived without such friction as his winning amiability could not easily palliate. In a multitude of his traits the idealism of many great Americans seems realized. That idealism I have found in the make-up of Fischel. In him it took at an early age the shape of altruism and humanitarianism. Social questions were closely allied in him with the needs of medicine, which never will fulfil its destiny unless it makes the welfare of individuals and the community its sacred duty. So there are many reasons why his name will live.

It will be an evil day for St. Louis, for Washington University and the medical profession if he and his like — if there be any — and his ideas be forgotten. In his modesty he never cared about display or notoriety or publicity. But without a tangible effort men like him leave their mark. Whoever has an interest in the public welfare will rejoice that this man has lived and worked amongst us. Many may feel as Tacitus says of Agricola, "*Neque lugere neque plangi fas est.*" No mourning or loud complaining is proper. The appropriate feeling amongst those who care for humanity and mankind and appreciate the fact that an influential and withal lovely man lived with us and for us — that feeling will be profound gratitude.

## WASHINGTON EMIL FISCHEL

AN ADDRESS BY FREDERIC A. HALL, LL.D.

As presiding officer of the occasion I have officially represented Washington University, with the development of whose medical department Dr. Fischel was so intimately identified. It now becomes my privilege to appear in an additional capacity. The committee in charge requests me to speak of Dr. Fischel and his work as a teacher in Washington University. Since the particular topic reached me rather late, I have taken the liberty of speaking from the standpoint of a patient and friend, briefly referring to him as a practicing doctor and as a man.

He was my physician, in whose medical judgment and prescribed treatment I had implicit confidence. He was my friend, in whose counsel I found security, and in whose companionship

I found delight. For the past two years especially advice was needed, occasionally of a delicate nature, as I endeavored wisely to administer affairs quite foreign to my previous experience and dealing with matters of present and future importance. Of all my acquaintances in the medical profession, whom it is my good fortune to count my friends, there was no one to whom I more often turned for disinterested guidance. He was familiar with every advance step in the marvelous expansion of the medical department during the past few years, an expansion in whose benefits he could, at best, have slight share and that for no long time. As the splendid preparations rapidly reached maturity his sustained interest was the professional satisfaction one might naturally entertain in the realization of a life-time's dream, a dream realized too late, however, for any material advantage to him.

His advice in matters pertaining to the department's welfare was always disinterested, but never impersonal. He could and did separate himself as he separated his interests from any such proposition, but in every discussion involving men he never lost sight of the fact that a man's interests were at stake. His consideration for the feelings of others was most pronounced. If a measure seemed unavoidably to cross the purposes and plans of another, he invariably considered how the measure could be adopted with the least possible injury to those concerned. Nothing pained him more than the alienation of long-time medical friends, when differences in judgment as to what was best made united effort no longer possible.

Dr. Fischel had but one enemy, the double-headed monster, disease and death. Against disease and death he waged uncompromising warfare. Disease and death impede man's usefulness and mar his happiness, therefore disease should be conquered and death held in check to the latest possible moment. He fought disease as one would resist an armed foe on the battle-field — a fight to the finish, utilizing every instrument and every device which preparation and skill and strategy and determination could command. He would not admit that death was inevitable until it actually came, for as he once remarked: "Death is a demon, ending a man's career and harassing the feelings of his friends. I hate death with all my soul." With such a disposition toward the enemy of mankind he felt it to be a sublime duty personally to equip himself by close study, by the recognition of every sane

prevention, by the adoption of sound remedies both in medicine and surgery for waging a successful warfare.

Difficulties or obstacles whether material or individual never swerved him from his aim in life. Those who were familiar only with the genial smile and gracious manner, so characteristic of him, failed to know the man if they did not realize that behind the pleasant word and gentle ways there lurked a determination and a clear sense of duty which could be sternness personified when necessary. The final development of this medical school and the hospitals adjacent has come through vicissitudes and episodes, some unavoidably embarrassing, whose history will never be written; but they were of the nature to try the hearts of the stoutest. Yet through them all Dr. Fischel held an unswerving course toward the desired goal, sacrificing even friends if need be for the accomplishment of the ultimate purpose.

Dr. Fischel had personal characteristics which added greatly to his efficiency as a family physician; his genial disposition was an invaluable asset. You who have called him to your homes when distress and anxiety hung dense as a cloud will recall the sense of security which was at once established by his cheering words and hearty handshake. When he entered the sick-room one seemed to realize that everything within the possibilities would be accomplished, and that somehow even the impossible might be attained; such was the confidence that his very presence and manner inspired.

His ability as a diagnostician was extraordinary. He instinctively got at the character and the source of the trouble. Yet what seemed almost an intuition was doubtless the result of painstaking care and penetrating insight. His respect for the modern laboratory method of determining disease was profound. I have often heard him remark that he doffed his hat to those scientifically trained in the laboratory, and he was keen to take advantage of their skill and knowledge in order to confirm his own judgment, but his confidence in reading a case never wavered and was rarely amiss.

Again, he never lowered the dignity of his profession to the level of purely commercial interests. A physician of his eminence and especially of his gracious manner could easily have been led into rarely lucrative fields had he allowed himself to do so. From what I know of the man, I doubt whether the fee ever influenced his acceptance of a case or his subsequent treatment. I know of

instances where large fees would have been reasonable and would have been paid cheerfully, yet no bill could be obtained. He positively refused in these cases to accept remuneration. Had he been a man of independent means I verily believe he would have practiced his profession for the mere love of it, irrespective of any financial returns.

He had slight regard for himself when the good of his patient was involved. To illustrate, allow me to relate a trifling personal incident. Once I asked him to make an early morning call. It was a cold, stormy winter morning; a bronchial trouble annoyed me greatly, and I sought safety in bed. His visit assured me that I had taken the proper precaution and he urged that I remain in bed for two or three days and in the house for a week, since it would be taking a risk to venture out. As the visit progressed I observed that he coughed much and that his cough resembled mine. I further observed that he was not looking in his usual health. Questioning him, I found that my trouble was his also, and that strictly speaking he too should be in bed, since to be out was to take a risk. He as a physician knew better than I what he should do, but it was the call, the professional demand, which outweighed personal considerations. We had a delightful visit together coughing a duet occasionally; whether I helped him I cannot say, but his vivacity and courage bettered my situation, and even to-day the memory of the occasion is fresh and fragrant with his presence.

Another striking characteristic of the man in whose honor we meet was his freedom from professional jealousy. The medical profession sometimes has associated with it a tendency to be envious of what others are accomplishing in the same profession. What may be the primary cause of this unfortunate situation is somewhat obscure. Possibly the fact that each one does his work in seclusion may explain it, but whatever the explanation, the fact is patent in the estimation of laymen. This professional jealousy is often manifested in the unwillingness of the older physicians to help young men in the profession.

In marked contrast with this, Dr. Fischel was especially interested in the advancement of young physicians. He would go out of his way to recommend such as were promising, advising that they be employed; following their cases with them; freely putting at their disposal the results of his ripe experience, and in every way encouraging them in the years of their struggle for a

livelihood. Not a few of the eminent younger men in the medical profession will cheerfully bear witness to the truthfulness of this statement. I should not be telling the whole truth were I to indicate that this interest was confined to young men in his own profession. He had unusual depth of good will toward young men as young men. He knew the dangers and difficulties which stood between them and creditable careers in whatever occupation they were to pass their lives. Not alone as a physician, but as a friend, his words of warning and especially of encouragement helped many a young man over the stormy and uncertain period of establishing himself. His purse was always open to the deserving; and his personal solicitation gave not a few young men positions in establishments and business houses. No young man will ever forget that embrace and the confident cheer with which Dr. Fischel stimulated him in forging ahead.

Those who knew Dr. Fischel only after he reached middle life can associate him with prosperity alone, but in his early life he knew the heartache of unsatisfied ambition and was associated with scant supply for reasonable wants. Whatever success came to him in later life he fairly and honorably won; won by devotion to his cause and by the skill which rewards the patient, persistent follower of his profession. He once remarked to me that occasionally when the number awaiting consultation was wearying he took courage in recalling the days when calls were few and of relatively slight importance. It was perhaps the remembrance of this strenuous experience in securing a professional foothold which made him so helpful to young physicians and gave him such sympathetic understanding of their needs.

Dr. Fischel graduated from the St. Louis Medical College in 1871. He immediately went abroad and spent the three following years in study and research. From 1874 to 1881 he was quiz master in the St. Louis Medical College; 1881-83, lecturer on therapeutics; 1883-88, professor of hygiene and forensic medicine, and from 1886 to the time of his death, professor of clinical medicine. His connection, then, with the school as now organized covers a period of more than forty years, inclusive of the time spent in the St. Louis Medical College, one of the medical schools to be incorporated into the present medical department of Washington University. This long and intimate association with the medical department identified him with its development and is indicative of the interest which he took in medicine from the

academic standpoint as well as from the practical side. He devoted himself enthusiastically to the classroom work, and gave careful preparation for the lectures which he was to deliver.

Such, in brief, are some of the things which can truthfully be said of Dr. Fischel. A character so winsome, a physician so eminent, a citizen so public spirited, a man so strong, might reasonably justify a eulogy. I have, however, studiously avoided any attempt at eulogy. I have endeavored to confine myself to a plain statement of facts, for the reason that in his case facts alone speak loudly. It were futile to endeavor to add value to Dr. Fischel's life by glowing words of praise. His life is his highest praise. What he did and what he was will perpetuate his memory in the hearts of all who knew him intimately.

No words can make good the loss of such a man—an irreparable loss to the community, to the medical profession, to countless friends, and most especially to his family. To-day we have met and have spoken to one another of this good man now gone. We have performed this simple act to symbolize our love for him and our allegiance to the high ideals for which he stood.

What his religious views were I do not know. We talked of many things at different times, a wide range of subjects was mutually interesting, but it so happened that our private religious views were never exchanged. Why, I cannot say; it may have been that each considered the subject so private as to be sacred. At any rate, we never spoke of them. So, I repeat, I do not know what religious views he held. But this I do know, that in his private life and outward conduct he illustrated to a rare degree the principles laid down by the humble peasant of Galilee, the philosopher of Nazareth, as entitling one who practiced them to an abundant entrance into a haven of rest beyond.

We who knew him will never forget the late Dr. Washington E. Fischel — physician, citizen, friend, man.









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